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## CRITICAL NOTES OF NEW AND OLD GENERA OF PLANTS.—VI.

BY J. A. NIEUWLAND.

### NYCTERIUM.

The plants now included generally in *Solanum* having the fifth stamen different in shape and usually larger than the other four well deserve by this one notable character alone, to constitute a separate genus. The name *Nycterium* for these plants was proposed by Ventenat.<sup>1</sup> Two species are native within the limits of this country. The genus well deserves the recognition it had already by a considerable number of noted botanists, such as Torrey, Link, Lindley, Sweet, Don, Engelmann, etc.

**Nycterium** Vent. l. c.

*Solanum* Linn., in part.

**Nycterium rostratum** Link, Enum. Hort. Berol I, 189 (1821).

*Solanum rostratum* Dunal, Sol., 234 pl. 24 (1813), *Solanum heterandrum* Pursh, Fl. Am. Sept., 156, pl. (1814). *Nycterium heterandrum* Heynh., Norm. II, 440 (1840).

**Nycterium citrullifolium** (Braun) Nwd.

*Solanum citrullifolium* Braun, Ind. Sem. Frib. (1849).

### PTERETIS AGAIN.

In the September number of *Rhodora* Fernald<sup>2</sup> shows that out Ostrich Fern is really distinct from the European *Matteucia Struthiopteris* and gives it the name *Matteucia nodulosa* (Michx.) Fernald (*Onoclea nodulosa* Michx.). We<sup>3</sup> have already pointed out that *Pteretis* Raf. (1818) antedated *Matteucia* Todara (1866). Was not perhaps *Pteretis* rejected with right for the reason given that names held to for fifty years are *nomina rejicienda* to give way to later *nomina conservanda*. A moment's reflection will show that even if the name *Matteucia* had been *universally accepted*, which is not true, it had not been accepted for fifty years at that. Then for what reason was it cast of. We had suggested several reasons why it might not prove acceptable.<sup>4</sup> We

<sup>1</sup> Ventenat, E. P., Malm. sub. t. 85 (1803).

<sup>2</sup> Vol. 17, p. 161 (1915).

<sup>3</sup> Am. Mid. Nat., Vol. III, 197 (1914).

<sup>4</sup> Am. Mid. Nat. l. c.

have guessed rightly, as we knew before hand we should, when so many alternatives were offered. In any case to try to determine what the "codists" of one persuasion, or the other might do in any given case where elementary logic may be thrown "to the winds" with impunity, is one of the lightest and most useless of occupations. According to the "American Code" the plant in question ought to have been called **Pteretis nodulosa** (Michx.) nov. comb., what the codists of any belief or none will call it depends to much on individual whims or so-called "interpretation" to be worth while venturing a guess, as the case in question actually showed beyond our expectation.

#### PSYLLIUM.

By habit as well as good characters of inflorescence *Plantago Psyllum* Linn. as also *Plantago arenaria*. stand apart so strikingly that they may well be considered in the segregated genus *Psyllium*. The genus was recognized by the ancients and many a one with fewer reasons for recognition is now maintained without question. We have often insisted that plants monoicous, and dioicous are not to be put in a genus with those, that have perfect flowers. In this very family the *Plantaginaceae* we have the genus *Limosella* that enjoys scarcely any other distinctive characters than such emphasized here and no one questions the validity thereof. Botanists would do well to be consistent in generic recognitions. The trivial name of the type *Plantago Psyllium* Linn. was used for this plant in generic designation by Dioscorides (4: 170) and was accepted by the older botanists. The plants of this proposed genus group differ from *Plantago* proper in being annual leafy-stemmed plants with flowers in capitate clusters instead of spikes. One species is reported from our region.

**Psyllium** (Diosc.) Juss., Gen. 90 (1789).

**Psyllium arenarium** (W. & K.) Mirb., Hist. XIV. 333 (1814).

*Plantago arenaria* W. & K., Pl. Par. Hung. I, 5: pl. 51, (1894)

#### MARGARITA LISTER.

The name *Margarita* Lister<sup>1</sup> for a plant of the *Myxomycetes* base on the type *Physarum metallicum* Berk & Br.<sup>2</sup> can not obtain because there is an older application of the genus name *Mar-*

<sup>1</sup> Lister, A., Monograph of Mycetozoa, 203 (1894).

" G., " " " " 256 (1911).

<sup>2</sup> Mag. Zool. Bot., I, 49 (1838).

*garita*<sup>3</sup> a segregate of *Aster*, under *Aster Bellidiastrum*. To replace the invalidated and therefore inapplicable *Margarita* Lister the name *Calomyxa* may be suggested.

**Calomyxa** Nwd., Nom. Nov.

*Margarita* Lister, Mycetozoa 1. c. (1894) (1911), not *Margarita* Gaudin (1829).

**Calomyxa metallica** (Berk. & Br.) Nwd.

*Margarita metallica* (Berk & Br.) Lister, 1. c. *Physarum metallicum* Berk & Br., Mag. Zool. Bot. I. 49 (1838). *Cornuvia metallica* Rost. Mon. App. 35.

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## IN REMEMBRANCE.

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RESOLVED that in the death of Doctor Edward Lee Greene the California Academy of Sciences has lost one of its most eminent members and the world one of its leaders in systematic botany. With sublime devotion to science he gave up all he had, time, energy and what money could be spared from his frugal needs to carrying on his work, publishing at his own expense a mass of original material to be compared in extent only with that of Asa Gray. Probably no other American botanist has published so many new species and genera and certainly no other has made such great sacrifices to carry on his work.

His wide travels and his rare powers of observation and discrimination gave him a personal knowledge of more living plants than is possessed to-day by any other botanist.

He collected at his own expense one of the best botanical libraries in this country and an herbarium rich in types of new species. It is greatly to be regretted that this library and herbarium are not in some Pacific Coast institution where their use would be greatest since his epoch making work was done on the Pacific Coast flora.

He possessed that rare type of courage, namely the courage of his convictions, and alone carried the banner of what to him was the truth in the face of the greatest opposition. No wonder that such a man who was also blessed with an attractive personality and whose knowledge was so great and so freely bestowed, drew

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<sup>1</sup> Gaudin, J. F., Fl. Helv. V, 335 (1829).